

AN
O R A T I O N.

PRONOUNCED BEFORE THE

4,
Fraternity of Masons,

AND A

NUMEROUS AUDITORY,

AT HANOVER,

IN THE COUNTY OF PLYMOUTH,

JUNE, the 24th, A. L. 5793.

BEING THE FESTIVAL OF ST. JOHN.

BY BROTHER Josiah Husley, ATTORNEY AT LAW,
HANOVER. K

"Behold how good and pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together
in unity."



B O S T O N—5793.

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Continuity of Relations

WILLIAM L. DUNN

AT LAW

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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WILLIAM L. DUNN

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK



An ORATION, &c.



AT the solicitation of a number of the worthy Brethren of our Ancient and Honourable Society of FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS, I appear in this Sacred Desk,* to address this splendid and respectable audience—the utmost extent of whose candour will be necessary, to rescue from the severity of criticism, those numerous defects, ever attendant on so hasty a production, from so unexperienced a pen.

THOUGH the *Altar of Masonry* is concealed with an impenetrable veil from the searching eye of curiosity—Yet, FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY, the leading steps which adorn the illustrious fabrick, are open to the view of all—have stood the shock of ages, and will survive even the general wreck of nature.

THE basis of *Masonry*, far from the stinted charity, that embraces a particular party, religion, or country, extends its influence to the great family of

* The Oration was delivered in the pulpit, at the Rev. Mr. MEL-LIN'S Meeting-House, in Hanover.

of man, and seeks around the globe for meek-eyed goodnefs in diftrefs, to pour into its afflicted bofom the balm of reftorative relief. The fubject of *Mafonry* as explained by a celebrated Author,* may be divided into the *Operative* and *Speculative*. By the former we allude to the ufeful rules of Architecture, whence a Structure derives figure, ftrength and beauty, and whence result a due proportion and a juft correſpondence in all its parts. By the latter, we learn to ſubdue the paſſions, act upon the ſquare, to live free from calumny or detraction, maintain ſecrecy, and praſtiſe charity.—Speculative Maſonry is ſo interwoven with religion, as to lay us under the ſtricteſt obligations to pay the Deity that rational homage, which at once conſtitutes our duty and our happinefs. It leads the contemplative to view with reverence and admiration, the glorious works of creation, and inſpires them with the moſt exalted ideas of the perfeſtions of the Divine Creator. Operative Maſonry furniſhes us with dwellings and convenient ſhelters from the viciffitudes and inclemencies of ſeaſons; and while it diſplays the influence of human wiſdom, not only in the choice, but in the arrangement of the fundry materials of which an edifice is compoſed, it demonſtrates that a fund of ſcience and induſtry is implanted in man, for the wiſeſt, moſt ſalutary, and beneficent purpoſes.

ARCHITECTURE was at firſt confined to what was neceſſary to man in the uſes of life; having nothing in view but ſolidity, utility and convenience,

* Vide our book of excellent conſtitutions.

iciency. To adorn buildings, and make them more splendid it called in other arts to its aid. It owed its birth to necessity; its embellishments to refinement. Buildings of brick, stone and marble, succeeded the cavern, the tent, and the cottage—And edifices were raised equally solid and magnificent, commodious and lasting. Formerly *Masonry* was chiefly Operative; confined to manual labour, and studied for improvement in those useful and elegant arts, which continue to constitute the employment, and contribute to the happiness of the greatest part of the human race. But as morals, learning and religion advanced in the world, it became Speculative, and attended to the cultivation of the mind and the regulation of the manners. Amidst the successive revolutions of kingdoms, the alterations of the forms of government, and the many changes of laws and customs, it has always remained much the same, excepting in the case of some arrangements made by the Great King SOLOMON, and some few improvements, adapting it to the improving state of Society.

Its permanency hath arisen upon its being built not upon mutable and perishable circumstances of an exterior nature, but upon some of the best affections of the human heart. Piety towards God the glorious Master Builder of the Universe, and love to mankind, are the two grand immoveable pillars which support its fabrick. So that at the present day when discoursing of Free-Masonry, we mean by it an Institution, for the promotion of the most extensive philanthropy,
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the most diffusive and disinterested benevolence, and universal virtue. To the common ties of humanity it adds a still stronger obligation to kind and friendly offices. Its members are such as are united together, for this worthy purpose, by the bonds of affectionate brotherly love and truth. It admits not of national, political or ecclesiastical distinctions. Every good man and true, whatever be his country, kindred, language or religion, may conform to the principles, and be a worthy member of this Ancient and Honourable Society. In every nation, he that walks in the salutary paths of virtue, whatever be his birth or situation in life, is accepted of us.

Without interfering with the religious or civil establishment of any country, this Institution unites all men in all, in its cause; and teaching to rise superior to private prepossessions, to local prejudices and distinctions, it would blend their affections in the mutual endearments of brotherhood and charity; and join their exertions in the diffusion of those virtuous sentiments, which do honour to our natures and our happiness. It would put an end to emulations, strife and envyings. It would make all the children of ADAM throughout the universe, the friends of each other. Ignorance, superstition, and vice, it would banish from the world: And like that excellent moral system, which gives energy to its motives, it would restore and establish peace on earth, and good will to men.

These

THESE I am allowed to say are some of its intentions ; and while it continues to effect these, it will still deserve and secure the patronage of the discerning and the good. And I am persuaded, that its increasing glory will burst through the mists of prejudice, and diffuse the light of truth, virtue and happiness to ages yet unborn.

No Institution under Heaven, was ever raised on a better principle, or more solid foundation ; nor were ever more excellent rules and useful maxims laid down, than are inculcated on all persons when initiated into the mysteries of this science. Men in all ages the most distinguished for wealth and genius, have added lustre to their characters, by joining this most Ancient and Honourable Society. And have never deemed it derogatory from their dignity to level themselves with the Fraternity ; to extend their privileges, and patronise their assemblies. Many the most respectable of the Clergy, both in *Europe* and *America*, who are Preachers of that religion, of which the universal Characteristicks, are universal Benevolence and unbounded Charity, have been initiated into the order, and are zealous for the interests of Free-Masonry ; which in the strongest manner inculcates the same charity and benevolence, and which like that religion, encourages every moral and social virtue ; which introduces peace on earth and good will towards mankind, and is the centre of union to those who otherwise might have remained at a perpetual distance. " Virtue the grand object in view, luminous as the meridian Sun,

Sun, shines resplendent on the mind; enlivens the heart, and converts cool approbation into warm sympathy and cordial affection."

BUT as time will not allow me to delineate all the beauties and excellencies of our noble institution, I hasten to address myself more particularly to my affectionate and beloved brethren: And while *Masonry* is thus spreading its influence through all parts of the globe, I heartily congratulate you on the late establishment of a *Lodge* in this town. A *Lodge*, in its infancy, distinguished for its regularity and choice of its members: But I presume, my Brethern, though the number is few, yet under the prudent conduct of our present *GUARDIAN**, accompanied, with the wise œconomy, and circumspection of our illustrious and worthy Brethern, this *Lodge* will shine with undiminished lustre, "even as long as the radiant Sun shall rise in the east to gild our days, and the pale Moon to illuminate our nights."

AND as useful knowledge is the grand object of our desire, we ought to apply with zeal to the practice and profession of *Masonry*.

THE ways of wisdom are beautiful, and lead to pleasure. Knowledge is attained by degrees, and cannot every where be found. Wisdom seeks the sacred shade, the lonely cell, designed for contemplation. There enthroned she sits, delivering her sacred oracles. There are we to seek her

* CHARLES TURNER, jun. Esq. of Scituate, R. W. G. M.

her and pursue the real bliss. Though the passage be difficult, the farther we trace it, the easier it will become. If we are united, our Society must flourish. Let all private animosities therefore, if any should exist, give place to peace and good fellowship. Let us cultivate brotherly love, the foundation and cap stone, the cement and glory of this ancient fraternity. Let us live within compass, and act upon the square, through all the vicissitudes of life, and while the wandering world is admiring our steadfast unanimity, it will strike the slanderer dumb, and disarm malevolence of its sting.

ABOVE all other virtues, (my Brethren) you are to practise benevolence and charity : These being the most distinguishing characteristics of this venerable Institution. The inconceivable pleasure of contributing towards the relief of our fellow creatures, can only be experienced by persons of a humane disposition ; who are naturally excited by the power of sympathy to extend their aid in alleviation of the miseries of others. This encourages the generous Mason to distribute his bounty with cheerfulness ; by supposing himself in their unhappy situation—he listens to their complaints with attention, bewails their misfortunes, and speedily relieves their distress.

HOWEVER, my brethren, I presume if you but for a moment contemplate that period of your lives, when you were first introduced into Mason-

ry ; pity and compassion will flow from your breasts at the sight of a poor and pennylefs brother ! Though Mafons are bound, by the moft facred tie, to aid and affift each other through all the viciffitudes of life, yet their benevolence ought to extend to all the human race. Every human being has a claim upon your kind offices. Take notice of the calamities and diftreffes of the unfortunate, and let their afflictions penetrate your hearts—" Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep." And be not idle fpectators of the joys or sorrows of others ; look around you for opportunities of alleviating the miferies and encreafing the happinefs of your neighbours ; and manifef, by a constant feries of generous and worthy actions, that you live not for yourfelves alone, but for your families, your friends, your country, and the world.

LET me recommend to your-attention, (my brethren) as objects of pity and compaffion, the widow, the fatherlefs, and the orphan child : The holy bible, which is the rule and guide of a Mafon's Faith, enjoins this as a duty upon all mankind.

A due deference and regard to the CLERGYMEN in your refpective parifhes, I earneftly recommend, as an indifpenfible duty : The office of Chriftian Miniftry, is of real importance to mankind ; and the character of a Chriftian Minifter, when properly fupported, is truly worthy of efteem
and.

and respect. Ever remember, he is detached from the many lucrative employments in the busy scenes of life ; and by far the greater part of his time engrossed in study : To speak masonically, only consider the great luminary of nature, which rising in the East, regularly diffuses light and lustre to all within its circle ; so in like manner, it is the province of a Clergyman to spread and communicate light and instruction, to all around him. And there is nothing more reasonable, than he should have an honourable support for his ministerial labours. But it is quite unnecessary to expatiate any longer under this head, as the three great Lights in Masonry will teach you the various duties which are required of you in life. Let us then be ever vigilant in the discharge of them, and particularly assiduous in cultivating those grand essentials of our constitution, Brotherly-Love, Beneficence and Truth. Thus we shall be always happy in assembling together. Our Lodge thus supported by Wisdom, Strength and Beauty ; adorned with Peace, Plenty, and Harmony ; cemented by Secrecy, Morality, and Good-Fellowship—what has it to fear ?

LET the tides of Time and Chance beat against its walls ; the gusts of Malice assault its towering height—it is all in vain !—Still shall the noble Structure firmly stand, and only be dissolved, when the pillars of the Universe shall be shaken, and,

—“ The great Globe itself,

“ Yea, all which it inherits shall dissolve,

“ And, like the baseless fabrick of a vision,

“ Leave not a wreck behind.”

If we thus live in strict amity and fraternal love with all just and upright Brethren, we may then say with the Royal Psalmist, "*Behold how good and pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity.*"

In addition to the plaudits of conscience, and the ineffable satisfaction we shall enjoy in our own breasts, it will prove to our enemies, that A GOOD MASON IS A GOOD MAN, AND A GOOD CHRISTIAN, and afford ourselves the greatest comfort here, by giving us a well grounded hope of finally attaining the celestial *Pass-Word*, and gain admittance into the Lodge of our SUPREME GRAND-MASTER, where pleasures flow forevermore: *Faith, Hope, and Charity*, are the three principal graces, by which we must be guided thither, of which *Charity*, or *Universal Love*, is the chief. When *Faith* shall be swallowed up in vision, and *Hope* in enjoyment, then true *Charity*, or *Brotherly Love*, will shine with the brightest lustre to all eternity.

" Shall stand before the host of Heaven confess,

" Forever blessing, and forever blest."

FINIS.



